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The study was designed to determine if a significant relationship existed between the organizational climate of the high school and the functions counselors performed in nine selected high schools in Pinellas County, Florida. Two instruments were used: (1) The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) dealing with eight organizational climate variables was administered to a random sample of 30 faculty members in each participating school, and (2) The Pinellas County Guidance Activity Log (PCGAL) which was used to record the average proportion of time spent by all counselors in eight schools on eight counselor functions. Statistical treatments included the multiple correlation coefficient, the F test, and the test for significance of linear correlation coefficient. It was concluded that no significant relationship existed between the organizational climate variables in the schools and the functions performed by counselors. Topics for further research are indicated. (Author/EK)

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Abstract

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND THE PERFORMANCE OF COUNSELOR FUNCTIONS

An investigation was performed concerning the relationship of existing organizational climate variables and the average proportion of time spent in various functions by counselors in selected high schools in Pinellas County, Florida. The study was undertaken to ascertain whether the organizational climate of the high school as determined by the influence of administrative and other personnel was significantly related to the guidance functions performed by school counselors.

The study was modeled after similar studies in business and industry which indicated that a relationship existed between organizational climate and the performance of individuals and groups within an organization. The study was based on the assumption that behavior is situationally determined.

An analysis of the data indicates that in general the relationships presented between existing organizational climate variables in the high schools and counselor functions were not significantly related. This would seem to suggest that in the present study the behavior of the counselor and his performance of specific functions was not situationally related.

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STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN SCHOOLS

Unlike business and industry, the school has not been subjected to extensive study in regard to its organizational climate and the effect of this climate on the productivity of the professional staff, as indicated by Charters in Gage (1963.)

The organizational climate of schools and the possible effect that it may have on staff members has only recently been expressed by Halpin and Croft (1962, 1963,). In their Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ.) The defined Organizational Climate thusly:

> "When we speak of organizational climate within the present context we will refer exclusively to the social interaction between the principal and the teachers--to the 'social' component of the organizational climate."

Halpin and Croft (1963) indicated that the organizational climate of the school can be construed as the "organizational personality of a school; figuratively, personality is to the individual what climate is to the school."

The importance of organizational climate and the contributions of the school counselor to pupils, school, and society as being dependent upon the existence of an environment or climate consistent with his responsibilities has been noted by Byrne (1963), Loughary, Stripling, and Fitzgerald (1965B), Peters and Shertzer (1963), Shertzer and Stone (1966), and Stewart and Warnath (1965.) Duncan (1965) indicated that certification and noncertification had no significant effect on a school counselor's performance of specific guidance functions. Kehas (1961) and Peters (1965) have maintained that a change in administrative organization would change the guidance program and ultimately the role and functions of the school counselor. Robinson (1966) recognized the potential effects of the situation in which the counselor works and recommended that the characteristics of the setting within which the counselor is operating be investigated as one factor affecting counselor growth and function. Despite these attempts to define counselor role and function, there still remains a hiatus in our knowledge of the actual factors involved.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to determine if a significant relationship existed between the organizational climate of the high school and the functions performed by school counselors in nine selected high schools in Pinellas County, Florida. The investigation was conducted through an analysis of the relationship of organizational climate variables as perceived by all professional staff members in each high school and counselor functions performed. The objective was to document organizational climate variables that were related to the functions high school counselors performed.

THEORETICAL BASES OF THE STUDY

The theoretical framework for this study has its foundation in several related theoretical bases represented in research done by Arnesberg (1951), Argyris (1952; 1957; 1958), Cartwright (1951), Chapel (1950), Festinger (1957), Getzels (1963), Lewin (1936; 1948; 1951), Sargeant (1951), Stogdill (1956), Tolman (1952), and White and Lippitt (1953). All of these writers have touched on the problems central to the present study by indicating that behavior in various settings is situationally determined. It was, therefore, hypothesized that the school counselor both as an individual and as a member of a group is subject to situational determinants of his behavior and the functions that he performs.

INSTRUMENTS USED IN THE STUDY

Two instruments were used to collect the data, the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) developed by Halpin and Croft (1962) and the Pinellas County Guidance Activity Log (PCGAL) used by Fitzgerald (1962C.)

The OCDQ was designed to portray the organizational climate of a school through the responses of the members of the faculty. The sixty-four items of the OCDQ are assigned to eight subtests which were delineated by factor-analytic methods and described by Halpin and Croft as consisting of the following:

TEACHERS' BEHAVIOR

1. Disengagement refers to the teachers' tendency to be "not with it." This dimension describes a group which is "going through the motions," a group that is "not in gear" with respect to the task at hand. It corresponds to the more general concept anomie as first described by Durkheim. In short, this subtest focuses upon the teacher's behavior in a task-oriented situation.

2. Hindrance refers to the teachers' feeling that the principal burdens them with routine duties, committee demands, and other requirements which the teachers construe as unnecessary busy work. The teachers perceive that the principal is hindering rather than facilitating their work.

3. Esprit refers to "morale." The teachers feel that their social needs are being satisfied, and that they are, at the same time, enjoying a sense of accomplishment in their jobs.

4. Intimacy refers to the teachers' enjoyment of friendly social relations with each other. This dimension describes a social-needs satisfaction which is not necessarily associated with task accomplishment.

PRINCIPAL'S BEHAVIOR

5. Aloofness refers to behavior by the principal which is characterized as formal and impersonal. He "goes by the book" and prefers to be guided by rules and policies rather than to deal with the teachers in an informal, face-to-face situation. His behavior, in brief, is universalistic rather than particularistic, nomothetic rather than idiosyncratic. To maintain this style, he keeps himself--at least "emotionally"--at a distance from his staff.

6. Production emphasis refers to behavior by the principal which is characterized by close supervision of the staff. He is highly directive, and plays the role of a "straw boss." His communication tends to go in only one direction, and he is not sensitive to feedback from the staff.

7. Thrust refers to behavior by the principal which is characterized by his evident effort in trying to "move the organization." "Thrust" behavior is marked not by close supervision, but by the principal's attempt to motivate the teachers to the example which he personally sets. Apparently, because he does not ask the teachers to give of themselves any more than he would willingly give of himself, his behavior, though starkly task-oriented is nonetheless viewed favorably by the teachers.

8. Consideration refers to behavior by the principal which is characterized by an inclination to treat the teachers "humanly," to try to do a little something extra for them in human terms. (pp. 40-41.)

The validity or appropriateness of the use of the OCDQ in the present study was borne out in research done by Andrews (1965.)

The PCGAL is an instrument used to make a time-study analysis of the performance of functions by school counselors. It was developed in Pinellas County, Florida, by Fitzgerald (1962C.)

COLLECTION OF DATA

The OCDQ was administered to a random sample of thirty faculty members in each participating high school. The administration of the OCDQ was not completed by the deadline date in two of the original eleven schools, so they were excluded from the study. Eighty-nine percent of the OCDQ forms received from the nine high schools remaining in the study were usable. The PCGAL was completed by all counselors in the nine high schools on two separate designated days. One hundred percent of the PCGAL forms from the nine high schools remaining in the study were usable.

STUDY DESIGN

This study first involved measurement of eight organizational climate variables defined in the OCDQ (disengagement, hindrance, esprit, intimacy, aloofness, production, thrust, consideration) in each of the high schools in Pinellas County, Florida. Next, the average proportion of time spent by all school counselors in each high school on eight counselor functions was recorded on the PCGAL. These eight functions are counseling, conferences, testing, group guidance, clerical, correspondence, miscellaneous-guidance related, other non-guidance related. Next, a relationship was obtained between all school scores on each climate variable and the average proportion of time spent by counselors in the different counselor functions. Statistical tests used in analyzing the data and testing the four hypotheses in the study consisted of the multiple correlation coefficient and F test as recommended in Anderson (1957), and test for significance of linear correlation coefficient as recommended in Ferguson (1967).

No effort was made to manipulate any variables in the high school setting or in the performance of counselor functions. Only statistical analysis of the existing conditions as they were reported was made to ascertain if any significant relationships existed between organizational climate variables as measured by the OCDQ and the performance of counselor functions as measured by the PCGAL.

HYPOTHESES TESTED

The following hypotheses which were constructed apriori on the basis of guidance literature were tested as the ones most strongly expected to provide positive evidence for the study. However, all sixty-four simple relationships were also examined in order to determine whether other unexpected relationships existed.

Hypothesis 1: The average proportion of time that the counselors spend in the counseling function will be significantly correlated with the combination of scores obtained by all schools on intimacy, consideration, and hindrance variables. Within this multiple relationship intimacy and consideration will be positively related and hindrance will be negatively related to the average proportion of counselor time spent in counseling.

Hypothesis 2: The average proportion of time that the counselors spend in the conference function will be significantly correlated with the combination of scores obtained on the esprit, production emphasis, and thrust variables. All three of the predictor variables will be positively related to the average proportion of time counselors spend in the conference function.

Hypothesis 3: The average proportion of time that the counselors spend in the miscellaneous - guidance related functions will be significantly correlated with the combination of scores obtained on the disengagement, hindrance, and production variables. All three of the predictor variables will be positively related to the average proportion of time counselors spend in the miscellaneous - guidance related function.

Hypothesis 4: The average proportion of time that the counselors spend in the other - nonguidance - related functions will be significantly correlated with the combination of scores obtained on the hindrance, aloofness, and production emphasis variables. All three of the predictor variables will be positively related to the average proportion of time counselors spend in the other - nonguidance related function.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

An analysis of the linear correlations between the organizational climate variables and the average proportion of counselor time spent in various functions shows a non-significant relationship, as presented in Table 1. Only three relationships out of a correlation matrix of sixty-four simple correlations were at the .05 level of significance, which is the same that could be expected to occur by chance. Apparently the proportion of counselor time spent in the various functions performed has little relationship to existing organizational climate variables.

A summary of the four hypotheses tested indicated that the relationships obtained between organizational variables and counselor functions were in general other than those anticipated. It would appear that the arbitrary grouping of organizational climate variables into hypotheses was effective if taken together but that the strength of relationship in each hypothesis was attributed to one major organizational climate variable, as can be observed in Table 1. It was the strength of the individual relationships, with some being in the opposite direction from that anticipated, that supported the hypotheses. The individual correlations between the average proportion of counselor time spent in different functions and the organizational climate of the individual schools can be observed in Table 1. Table 2 includes the average proportion of counselor time spent in performing various functions in the nine selected high schools in Pinellas County, Florida. Mean standard scores on organizational climate variables in the nine selected high schools in Pinellas County can be seen in Table 3.

The relationship between the performance of specific functions and situational variables, that is, organizational climate, is not supported in the present study. The average proportion of time spent by counselors in all functions is similar in all schools in the sample regardless of the organizational climate. An indication of the relationship between functions which were deemed productive and others deemed nonproductive and the different components of organizational climate variables and the average proportion of counselor time in productive versus nonproductive functions as presented in Table 4. Productive counselor functions were

TABLE 1. Correlation Matrix of Organizational Climate Variables and Average Proportion of Counselor Time Spent in Various Functions in Nine Selected High Schools in Pinellas County, Florida

	Disengagement	Hindrance	Esprit	Intimacy	Aloofness	Production Emphasis	Thrust	Consideration
Counseling	.012	.699*	-.125	-.392	-.156	-.023	.170	-.239
Conferences	-.130	-.661	.307	.402	.304	.242	-.283	-.064
Testing	.595	.292	-.335	.040	.418	-.249	-.488	-.200
Group G.	-.729*	-.412	.439	-.233	.387	.049	.488	-.084
Clerical	.375	.469	-.443	.231	-.357	-.556	-.125	.478
Correspondence	-.549	-.035	.391	-.577	-.217	.198	.717*	-.164
Miscellaneous Guid. Rel.	.174	.007	-.250	-.078	.414	.569	-.397	-.364
Other - Non Guidance Rel.	.378	-.495	.124	.296	.213	.019	-.376	-.127

N=9

*Significant at the .05 level

TABLE 2. Average Proportion of Counselor Time Spent in Performing Various Functions in Nine Selected High Schools in Pinellas County, Florida

Function Performed	Average Proportion of Time Expressed as a Percentage of Total Time in each School									Over-all Average of Schools
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9	
Counseling	20.50	34.56	33.11	33.33	31.52	27.46	22.20	34.91	29.36	29.66
Conferences	28.00	06.91	18.83	04.76	26.87	22.31	29.48	18.53	23.00	19.85
Testing	01.00	01.49	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.27
Group Guidance	05.00	01.48	00.00	04.76	02.05	06.00	02.13	08.40	00.00	03.31
Clerical	11.10	43.45	11.47	22.22	06.05	20.17	12.61	10.12	36.87	19.34
Correspondence	04.00	02.22	08.87	26.98	10.25	07.72	06.39	18.96	01.62	09.66
Miscellaneous Guidance Related	12.83	02.22	16.88	01.58	11.61	09.87	08.34	03.87	00.00	07.46
Other-Non Guidance Related	19.00	09.13	10.82	06.34	11.61	06.43	18.82	05.17	09.13	10.71

N=9

TABLE 3. Mean Standard Scores on Organizational Climate Variables in Nine Selected High Schools in Pinellas County, Florida

School Number	No. of Respondents, Each School	Organizational Climate Variables							
		Disengagement	Hindrance	Esprit	Intimacy	Aloofness	Production Emphasis	Thrust	Consideration
1.	30	57.69	41.87	54.34	59.60	58.35	57.11	31.78	42.23
2.	20	64.64	60.87	38.37	48.95	55.59	38.34	42.09	51.13
3.	30	64.28	60.67	40.33	54.11	43.41	54.86	36.23	46.08
4.	26	42.38	51.31	52.69	40.87	37.08	53.13	68.98	53.56
5.	32	45.34	48.59	53.89	39.80	60.47	67.01	47.11	37.75
6.	27	33.26	48.81	38.85	49.06	54.97	53.44	57.32	64.25
7.	25	45.70	35.08	56.53	55.56	47.27	38.09	61.25	60.47
8.	29	35.71	43.58	66.70	53.32	54.41	44.31	58.42	43.52
9.	22	54.99	48.75	53.18	64.80	34.51	45.03	39.82	58.78

N=9

TABLE 4. Correlation Between Organizational Climate Variables and the Average Proportion of Productive and Non-productive Time in All Selected High Schools in Pinellas County, Florida

	Disengagement	Hindrance	Esprit	Intimacy	Aloofness	Production Emphasis	Thrust	Consideration
Average Proportion of Productive Time	-.145	-.680*	.459	.269	.472	.262	-.246	-.317
Average Proportion of Non-Productive Time	.188	.687*	-.474	-.259	-.434	-.271	.202	.295

N=9
*Significant at the .05 level.

counseling, counseling conferences, group guidance, and miscellaneous--guidance-related. Nonproductive counselor functions were composed of testing, clerical, correspondence, and other--non-guidance-related. The number of significant relationships obtained between the average proportion of counselor time devoted to productive and nonproductive functions and organizational climate included only one at the .05 level, no more than could be expected by chance.

DISCUSSION

It is interesting to note that in the correlation of productive versus nonproductive counselor functions and organizational climate the one significant relationship that existed was between hindrance and productive functions. Perhaps the reason for counselors performing a myriad of different activities as noted by the California State Department of Education (1963), Doi, Hyman, and Young (1962), Farwell and Vekich (1959), Fitzgerald (1962A), Gold (1962), Martin (1957), and Wrenn (1962), cannot be explained as being determined by the nomothetic dimension or existing organizational climate in the counselor's working environment.

Perhaps the organizational climate of the high school has a different effect on the professionally trained school counselor than on his counterpart who has been studied in business and industry. It is possible that the organizational climate of the school affects the feelings of professional staff personnel but does not significantly affect the amount of time or type of functions they actually perform. Esprit among the faculty and the amount of time spent in counseling was noted in Tables 2 and 3. The two schools with the lowest esprit scores were among the top schools in the proportion of time that counselors spent in counseling. "The principle of supporting relationships" stated by Likert (1961) as having a positive effect on the performance or behavior of individuals in industry is not supported in the present study in which, as shown in Table 1, the organizational climate variable of consideration is negatively related to all counselor functions, except the clerical function, with which there is a high positive relationship.

FINDINGS

From the statistical treatment of the data in which the four hypotheses related to the present study were tested using an F Test against multiple correlations and a regression equation for each hypothesis that was tested at the .05 level of significance, and correlational relationships that were established in Table 1 as simple correlations, the following conclusions may be drawn concerning the specific sample utilized in the study.

1. A significant relationship was established between the combination of scores and the intimacy, consideration, and hindrance variables and the average proportion of counselor time spent in the counseling function.

2. The significance of the relationship between the combination of scores on the intimacy, consideration, and hindrance variables and the average proportion of counseling time was due almost entirely to the unexpected positive relationship between the hindrance variable and the counseling function, as can be observed in Table 1.

3. No significant relationship was established between the combination of scores on the esprit, production emphasis and thrust variables, and the average proportion of counselor time spent in the conference function.

4. A significant relationship was established between the combination of scores obtained on the disengagement, hindrance, and production emphasis variables and the average proportion of counselor time spent in the miscellaneous--guidance-related function. The majority of the strength of this relationship was attributed to the correlation between the production emphasis variable and the miscellaneous--guidance-related function, as can be seen in Table 1.

5. No significant relationship was established between the combination of scores obtained on the hindrance, aloofness, and production emphasis variable and the average proportion of counselor time spent in the other--non-guidance related function.

6. Only three significant relationships were established among the sixty-four correlations between organizational climate variables and the average proportion of counselor time spent in the eight different functions. This would seem to suggest that organizational climate in the high school, as opposed to that in business and industry, is not significantly related to counselor behavior.

7. No significant relationship was established between the average proportion of counselor time devoted to productive and nonproductive counselor functions and the eight organizational climate variables. This would seem to suggest that the functions performed by counselors are determined by something either in addition to or other than the nomothetic dimension of the high school in which they work.

8. A significant interrelationship in anticipated directions was established between organizational climate variables in the nine selected high schools employed in the study, tending to confirm the use of the OCDQ as a measurement instrument.

9. No significant relationship was established between the organizational climate variables that are attributed to the influence of the high school principal and the performance of specific counselor functions. This would tend to indicate that the high school principal's behavior is not significantly related to the behavior of high school counselors.

10. In general, the number and significance of the relationships presented in the data indicate that the existing organizational climate variables in the high schools in the study are not a significant determinant of counselor functions performed; in other words, that the behavior and the performance of specific functions are not situationally related.

11. The use of PCGAL as a measuring instrument appears to be satisfactory when the data obtained are compared against another study in the literature and within separate schools within the sample.

IMPLICATIONS

The anticipated relationship between given organizational climate variables and the performance of specific counselor functions were not obtained in the present study. No significant relationship was shown between the organizational climate variables in the high school and the functions performed by counselors.

Questions that the present study provoke for further research are whether the organizational climate of the school affects the feelings of school counselors but do not significantly affect the amount or type of functions they actually perform. The common vocalization from counselors of restrictions in their working environment and pressure toward emphasis of the many functions that they must perform, functions that they feel they should not perform, are not supported in the present study. In the study sample there is no significant relationship between organizational climate variables and counselor functions.

A topic for further research that was not answered in the present study is whether the counselor himself or other unknown variables determine his behavior. The original question which is also in need of more research is whether the behavior of the counselor is related to the atmosphere in which he operates.

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